



FH
[REDACTED]

STATE OF WISCONSIN
Division of Hearings and Appeals

In the Matter of

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

DECISION

FWP/170197

PRELIMINARY RECITALS

Pursuant to a petition filed November 18, 2015, under Wis. Admin. Code § HA 3.03(4), to review a decision by the Fond Du Lac County Department of Social Services in regard to FoodShare benefits (FS), a hearing was held on December 22, 2015, at Fond Du Lac, Wisconsin.

The issue for determination is whether the agency correctly discontinued Petitioner's FoodShare for failing to meet Able-Bodied Adult without Dependent (ABAWD) work requirements.

There appeared at that time and place the following persons:

PARTIES IN INTEREST:

Petitioner:

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Respondent:

Department of Health Services
1 West Wilson Street, Room 651
Madison, Wisconsin 53703

By: Deborah Bohlman

Fond Du Lac County Department of Social Services
50 N Portland St
Fond Du Lac, WI 54935

ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE:

David D. Fleming
Division of Hearings and Appeals

FINDINGS OF FACT

1. Petitioner (CARES # [REDACTED]) is a resident of Fond Du Lac County.
2. Petitioner filed this appeal to contest the discontinuance of her FoodShare benefits effective November 1, 2015. Those benefits were discontinued for failure to meet the participation requirements of the FoodShare Employment and Training (FSET) program as an Able-bodied Adult Without Dependents (ABAWD) who was required to meet a work requirement.

3. Petitioner had an open FoodShare case that was reviewed in May 2015. She was determined to be subject to mandatory ABAWD rules. Petitioner was working at the time but not for more than 80 hour per month and so assigned to the FoodShare Employment and Training (FSET) program. In addition her work, Petitioner was assigned by FSET to 9 hours of volunteer activity, 9 hours of employment search and 2 hours of career research.
4. Petitioner only submitted activity logs for part of June 2015, none for October and her September logs were not submitted until November 3, 2015.
5. Petitioner's time limited FoodShare benefits have been received for the months of June, September and October 2015.

DISCUSSION

Effective July 1, 2014, Wisconsin began the Able-Bodied Adults without Dependents (ABAWD) policy in Kenosha, Racine and Walworth counties. *FoodShare Wisconsin Handbook (FSH) §3.17.1.2*. This was implemented statewide as of April 1, 2015. *Id.*

Under ABAWD rules, childless, able-bodied adults must either meet ABAWD work requirements or be exempt from the work requirement in order to receive FoodShare benefits. *FSH §3.17.1.1*. ABAWDs who are not exempt and who do not meet the work requirement are only allowed to receive 3 full months of time-limited benefits in a 36-month period. *Id.*

A person is considered an ABAWD, if that person is:

- ...
- 18 to 49 years in age*;
- Able to work;
- Not residing in a household with a child under age 18 (regardless of the individual's relationship to the child, whether the child is included in the individual's FS assistance group, or the child's FS eligibility status); and
- Not pregnant.
- ...

FSH §3.17.1.4.

An ABAWD may be exempt from work requirements if the person:

1. Is determined unfit for employment, which includes someone who is:
 - a) Receiving temporary or permanent disability benefits from the government or a private source;
 - b) Mentally or physically unable to work, as determined by the IM agency;
 - c) Verified as unable to work by a statement from a health care professional or social worker;
2. Is responsible for the care of a child under age 6 or caring for an incapacitated person, either of which live outside the home;
3. Is receiving Unemployment Compensation (UC), or has applied for UC and is complying with UC work requirements;
4. Is regularly participating in an alcohol or other drug addiction (AODA) treatment or rehabilitation program;
5. Is a student of higher education and is otherwise eligible for FS ([3.15.1](#));
6. Is a full-time high school student age 18 or over;
7. Is receiving Transitional FS benefits; or
8. Is meeting the ABAWD work requirement.

FSH §3.17.1.5.

An ABAWD meets the ABAWD work requirement if one of the following applies:

1. Working a minimum of 80 hours per month. Use converted work hours if paid weekly or bi-weekly;
2. Participating and complying with an allowable work program at least 80 hours per month; * [includes FSET]
3. Both working and participating in an allowable work program for a combined total of at least 80 hours per month; or
4. Participating and complying with the requirements of a workfare program.
FSH, §3.17.1.7 (asterisk comment omitted).

Also applicable here are provisions from the Department of Health Services' *FSET Handbook*. Activity logs must be submitted by the 5th of the month following the activity month. *FSET Handbook, §6.5*. Further, by the second Saturday of the 3rd month of time limited benefits, the FSET agency is required to record whether a person in the 3rd month of time limited benefits is anticipated to meet FSET requirements for the month. *FSET Handbook, §6.5.4.3*.

Petitioner testified that she was working or volunteering as required and did submit the required participation logs. Nonetheless, she concedes that she has not kept copies of the logs that she claims to have submitted but for which the agency has no record.

I am declining to reverse this discontinuance of Petitioner's FoodShare. Simply the FSET requirement is twofold – participation and timely documentation of that participation. Quite frankly, it does not seem that Petitioner was recognizing the urgency of these requirements and taking them seriously. Petitioner did not demonstrate that she met FSET participation requirements and has used her 3 months of time limited benefits. There is no basis for reversing the agency action or adjusting the time limited benefit clock.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

That the agency correctly discontinued Petitioner's FoodShare benefits for failing to meet ABAWD requirements.

THEREFORE, it is

ORDERED

That this appeal is dismissed

REQUEST FOR A REHEARING

You may request a rehearing if you think this decision is based on a serious mistake in the facts or the law or if you have found new evidence that would change the decision. Your request must be **received within 20 days after the date of this decision**. Late requests cannot be granted.

Send your request for rehearing in writing to the Division of Hearings and Appeals, 5005 University Avenue, Suite 201, Madison, WI 53705-5400 **and** to those identified in this decision as "PARTIES IN INTEREST." Your rehearing request must explain what mistake the Administrative Law Judge made and why it is important or you must describe your new evidence and explain why you did not have it at your first hearing. If your request does not explain these things, it will be denied.

The process for requesting a rehearing may be found at Wis. Stat. § 227.49. A copy of the statutes may be found online or at your local library or courthouse.

APPEAL TO COURT

You may also appeal this decision to Circuit Court in the county where you live. Appeals must be filed with the Court **and** served either personally or by certified mail on the Secretary of the Department of Health Services, 1 West Wilson Street, Room 651, Madison, Wisconsin 53703, **and** on those identified in this decision as “PARTIES IN INTEREST” **no more than 30 days after the date of this decision** or 30 days after a denial of a timely rehearing (if you request one).

The process for Circuit Court Appeals may be found at Wis. Stat. §§ 227.52 and 227.53. A copy of the statutes may be found online or at your local library or courthouse.

Given under my hand at the City of Milwaukee,
Wisconsin, this 12th day of January, 2016

\sDavid D. Fleming
Administrative Law Judge
Division of Hearings and Appeals



State of Wisconsin\DIVISION OF HEARINGS AND APPEALS

Brian Hayes, Administrator
Suite 201
5005 University Avenue
Madison, WI 53705-5400

Telephone: (608) 266-3096
FAX: (608) 264-9885
email: DHAmail@wisconsin.gov
Internet: <http://dha.state.wi.us>

The preceding decision was sent to the following parties on January 12, 2016.

Fond Du Lac County Department of Social Services
Division of Health Care Access and Accountability